

**First Step Community Project**  
**Initial outline for Area Partnership funding application**

**Background**

First Step is committed to its founding principles which is “***WORKING TOGETHER TO SECURE A BETTER FUTURE FOR FAMILIES***”

First Step aims to provide opportunities for local families with young children with the best start in life, making positive choices by providing supportive centre-based and outreach activities, which encourages parents and children to develop their self-esteem, confidence and skills.

First Step has successfully expanded from the focus on nursery provision through to whole family and community support. We offer different entry routes for families depending on need through the following services:

- Playrooms- First Step has 2 playrooms for children aged 18mths – 5 years. We are in partnership with East Lothian Council to offer funded places for 3 and 4 year olds as well as priority 2's.
- Respite – this service offers short-term nursery placement for families going through a period of difficulty and works every closely with the Outreach service.
- Family Opportunities – This area offers a range a groups and courses for families to build skills, social networks, increase confidence and self-development.
- Outreach service- a dedicated outreach worker works with individuals on a one to one basis in the local community and within the project.
- Volunteering – First Step offers opportunities for individuals and the local community to build on skills and capacity through volunteering opportunities.

Located in the east of Musselburgh, First Step supports this traditionally low-income area, which is also affected by higher than average health and social issues. According to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, Musselburgh East is ranked within the 20% of the most deprived data zones in Scotland. The area known as the 'Wimpey's' (Data zone S01001592) where First Step is situated falls within the 15-20% of most deprived areas of Scotland.

Creating equality and early intervention is at the heart of what First Step does, and aims to create a more equal start in life for children and better outcomes for families, who are faced with greater challenges.

**Description of project**

First Step would like to employ a Speech and Language therapist on a part time basis. This role would have a focus on early intervention as well as some targeted work. The role would be based in our Early Years service and work directly with the children, staff and parent's. This would involve time spent within the playrooms working universally with all children with a clear focus on promoting and developing children's speech and language. Another key aspect of this role would be working in partnership with parents by holding workshops and information sessions on the parent's role in developing their child's speech and language and strategies to do this in everyday situations.

This role would also have a focus on targeted work with children who have identified Speech and Language concerns. support will take place on a 1:1 basis through sessions with individual children and parents and also within the playrooms.

We want to ensure that staff are also knowledgeable in how to support children both at a universal and targeted level so an important aspect of this role would include the training of staff to equip them with the skills for more intense support for children and their parents.

These strategies and interventions both universally and targeted will aim to increase children's speech and language development thus equipping them with the confidence and readiness to learn at the next key stage in their education. Confidence in and the acquisition of Speech and Language is therefore crucial in raising attainment for all children and early intervention and target support plays a

crucial role in the development of this.

## **Research and identified need**

### **First Step**

Within First Step there is a clear identified need for this input in terms of the number of identified children with Speech and Language delay. At present we have 40% of 2-3 years old and 26% of 3-5 year olds that are or will require a referral to Speech and Language. There is also evidence that once a referral has been made and an initial appointment given, parents don't attend or their attendance and participation in the process is limited.

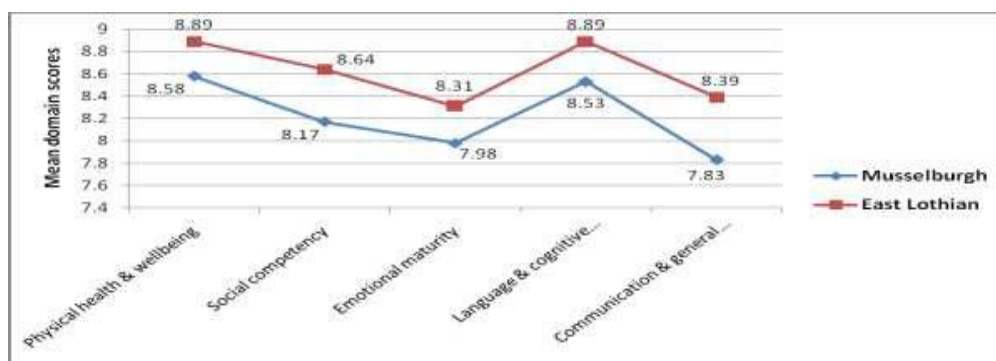
We have in some cases arranged for the initial session to take place within First Step so that there is familiarity for both the child and the parent which has resulted in engagement being much more positive.

### **Local Community**

Within the locality that First Step is located it is highlighted in the structural profile for East Lothian that Children living in Musselburgh East and Carberry wards perform below the Scottish average for reading and phonics. In Primary one the standard assessment used to measure the abilities of new pupils in reading show a decline in recent years within First Step's catchment area.

The EDI results across all socioeconomic status groups highlight evidence that in East Lothian 5 yr olds: do quite well in physical health and well-being and cognitive/language development domains; score average in social competency; and score less well in emotional maturity and communications and general knowledge domains.

Within the Musselburgh cluster the overall range of scores of children was similar to East Lothian as a whole (Fig 4) but lower than all of the other cluster areas (Appendix 1). Musselburgh has an almost identical pattern of scores to East Lothian as a whole but scores lower in all domains. It has the highest percentage of children in East Lothian scoring low on at least one domain at 40% (Appendix 2).



Effective language skills are essential for children to access the curriculum. In educational setting, spoken language is the primary medium through which practitioners teach and children learn. Language development is accepted as being critical to cognitive development and learning itself is seen by many as a social activity.

## **How this links into the Musselburgh Area Plan**

This proposal has a direct link into the Musselburgh Area plan key outcomes these include:

### **Strategic Objective 2 - Resilient people**

4.3 Children living in the Musselburgh Area get the best start in life.

**Financial cost of Project.**

We have estimated that the total cost for this project would be:

<i>Salary/NI/Pension</i>	£12,000
<i>(Employed on Grade 6 NHS Scale £26,565 pro rata Based on 10 hours)</i>	
<i>Running costs/Management Fee</i>	£1,500
<i>Travel</i>	£200
<i>Resources/training materials</i>	£3,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>£17,000</b>